  
*Fall*  
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# QUARTERLY NEWS LETTER

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The President's Page

Fine Book Printing in Western Germany

Since 1945

*by Rudolph Adolph*

SERENDIPITY

NOTES ON PUBLICATIONS :: EXHIBITIONS

ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

etc. etc.

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San Francisco*

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# The Book Club of California

FOUNDED in 1912, The Book Club of California is a non-profit association of book-lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature, and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors in the West and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

The Club is limited to seven hundred and fifty members. When vacancies exist membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular Membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues of \$15.00.\* Dues date from the month of the member's election.

Members receive the *Quarterly News-Letter* and all parts of the current Keepsake series, *Treasures of California Collections*. They have the privilege, but not the obligation, of buying the Club publications which are limited, as a rule, to one copy per member.

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\*Excerpt from by-laws of the Club: "... of the total of \$15.00 annual dues... the amount of \$2.00 shall be in consideration for the *Quarterly News-Letter*... and the additional amount of \$3.00 shall be in consideration for the annual keepsakes..." Extra copies of keepsakes or *News-Letters*, when available, are sold to members at 50c each. Membership dues and contributions (including books or documents, at current market value, suitable for the Club's library) are deductible in computing income taxes.



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LOOKING at the Club's *Guest Book*, it is interesting to note the number of members, especially those from out of town, who have recently included the Club Rooms on their itineraries. We were delighted when Lessing J. Rosenwald of Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, one of our most celebrated bibliophiles, stopped by. Peter Fahey was here, David Magee dropped in, and a pleasant hour was spent discussing books and possible future Book Club publications. A few days later, Bob Scheel flew in bringing news of other New York members, including displaced San Franciscans. Another New York visitor, earlier this year, was Franklin B. Adams, Jr.

Mrs. Alfred L. Castle of Honolulu visited the Club and, since then, Lew Allen has sent in a clipping telling of rare books and manuscripts, including the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, that were on display at the University of Hawaii. All were from Mrs. Castle's library.

In July Elleine H. Stones arrived with Allan Metz. Mrs. Stones is in charge of the Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library. Also a July guest was Dorothy Abbe from Hingham, Massachusetts. Miss Abbe has been doing some remarkable work with tone-line photography, and she brought with her a

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dummy of one of W. A. Dwiggins' marionette plays which she is illustrating with this process. Miss Abbe is printing the book at her Press of the Little Red Hen and we await it with unusual interest.

And speaking of printers, Eleanor Bosworth Black, who has the Black Wing Press at Sonoma, was a visitor—also Mark Lansburgh of Santa Barbara who has sent the Club Library a handsome broadside, the first to be printed on his Albion Press. Mallette Dean stopped by and left a copy of the beautiful little book he designed and printed for Dawson's. Brother Antoninus spent an afternoon looking over some of the Club's treasures. Dr. Donald A. Charnock, Los Angeles, has been in several times and has sent a sample from his Live Oak Press. In fact, we would have to expand the *News-Letter* to tell of all the printers, amateur and otherwise, who have found the Club both interesting and useful.

All members have benefited from some of these visits as we invite the private presses to send their announcements to the members, and our antiquated addressograph has had some noteworthy operators. Jane Grabhorn pounded out the announcements of their most recent Shakespeare volume. Lew Allen sent out a brochure of his book, *The Noble Knight Paris & the Fair Vienne*. Mrs. Adrian Wilson (Joyce Lancaster of the Inter-Players) was an apt addressograph operator for their *Printing for Theater* announcement, though she welcomed Frieda Ferguson's assistance. At times, there have not been enough copies for all members and only every other member has received one—we regret this but do not complain. Private press owners sometimes wear out at the thought of 750 copies.

Many would-be—or should they be termed future printers?—Don Fleming, Jim Hammond, Bob McCaughna, and others have been in. Bob and Jim Robertson came in to meet Dorothy Abbe and to find out about the tone-line process. However, Jim Robertson can hardly be called a would-be printer as he has proved himself to be one of the most talented of the younger group. At present, he is working on Christmas cards with reproductions of Albrecht Duerer woodcuts—if you want to order any, let us know and we will pass the word along. Possibly we can get some samples here.



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As to Club business—Keepsakes, *News-Letter*, books, and finances—all is well.

I know the above does not read like a State-of-the-Club message signed "Carl I. Wheat," but it was written at Mr. Wheat's request. It is with deepest regret that we announce our President is ill again, but rallying as we knew he would.

ELIZABETH DOWNS, *Secretary*

## Fine Book Printing in Western Germany

Since 1945

by *Rudolph Adolph*\*

WHEN we look through the history of bibliophilism—a history full of saints, sinners, emperors and anonyms, rich men, misers, scholars, fools, priests, heretics, monks and knights, men-of-the-world and eccentrics—we are always struck anew by the discovery that the private collector has been decisive in the preservation of cultural treasures. This statement could be richly illustrated from olden days onwards. We must remember this fact when throwing a glance over the development of bibliophilism in Western Germany and its endeavors for the "beautiful book."

Statistics tell us that out of every public and scientific library in Germany, every third book was destroyed during the Second World War. What has been lost by private collectors is quite impossible to say, yet we are continually reading and hearing that it was possible for private collectors to save many a valuable item from the general destruction. But what has been preserved above

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\*Rudolph Adolph, free-lance writer (main subjects: modern literature, bibliography) and bibliophile, has worked for several foreign and local newspapers and magazines, amongst which are: *Börsenblatt für den Deutschen Buchhandel* (Official Organ of the Association of German Publishers) and *Stultifera navis*, a magazine published by the Swiss Bibliophile Society. He is author of *Hermann Hesse—Schutzpatron der Bücherfreunde* (Hermann Hesse—Patron Saint of Book Lovers), *Rudolf Alexander Schröder-Bibliography*, *Martin Bodmer und die Weltliteratur* (Martin Bodmer and World Literature), and *Liebhabeereien mit Büchern* (Books as a Hobby). Mr. Adolph gives lectures at literary and bibliophile societies, and also over the radio.

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everything else, is the love for beautiful books. And so it was actually German bibliophiles who—at a time when the face of German cities was torn in pieces—appealed for starting collecting again as one could not yet think about creating the beautiful books always dreamed about by bibliophiles, and at a time when the recollection of European tradition was more necessary than ever.

After the first tentative efforts, it was decided in 1948 to re-found the Weimarer Bibliophilen-Gesellschaft in Lichtenfels/Main as the Society of Bibliophiles. Dr. Rudolph Alexander Schröder was elected as president. His "Lichtenfels Address" has gone, so to speak, into literary history. It has now been taken together with his Hamburg, Bremen, Cologne and Frankfort Bibliophile addresses in the *Collected Work in Five Volumes* (Suhrkamp-Verlag Frankfurt/Main).

The choice of Rudolph Alexander Schröder as president was not merely a matter of formality, it was at the same time a survey and the history of German efforts in connection with beautiful books.

"Book Art" and "Book Decoration" are terms which were coined round the turn of the century. They are controversial terms. Schröder commented on this remarkable terminology in 1951 in *Imprimatur*, but the very existence of these expressions announces that there were endeavors being made for beautiful books. Since William Morris and his Kelmscott Press, efforts were also made in Germany to introduce a renaissance in book presentation. Rudolph Alexander Schröder, together with his cousin, A.W. von Heymel, and with the co-operation of Otto Julius Bierbaum founded the periodical called *Die Insel* (*The Island*) in 1899. Out of this foundation grew the future Insel Publishing House (Insel-Verlag).

During the years of the first "Insel," there appeared a number of publications for bibliophiles, some of them not being intended for ordinary trade. Here Schröder had the opportunity of supervising the publication of works by his friend, Hugo von Hoffmannsthal. One of the most valuable publications dating from this period, and which is very much admired by bibliophiles, is Hugo von Hoffmannsthal's *Der Kaiser und die Hexe* (*The Emperor and the Witch*) with many title drawings and capitals by Heinrich



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Vogeler. In 1903 Hoffmannsthal's *Das kleine Welttheater oder die Glücklichen* (*The Little World Theatre or the Fortunate Ones*) appeared with a drawing, capitals, and cover design by Aubrey Beardsley.

In later years, after the "Insel" had come to an end, Schröder's own books (*poems and translation*), appeared, thanks to the patronage of A.W. von Heymel. From these may be specially mentioned *Das Hohe Lied Salomons* (*The Great Song of Solomon*), the text by R.A. Schröder, with initials, title, and cover design by F.W. Kleukens. Three hundred copies on Japanese paper in tooled Morocco leather, printed by the Ernst Ludwig Press in Darmstadt, Number V, 1909. Also may be mentioned Schröder's translation of Homer's *Die Odyssee*, 475 copies printed under the direction of Harry Graf Kessler with woodcuts by Aristide Maillol and initials by Eric Gill ("Insel" Publishers, 1910). Once again we find the combination of Maillol and Eric Gill, together with Schröder, working on a most beautiful—and today very valuable—publication, Publius Vergilius Maro's *Eclogae et Georgica* translated by R.A. Schröder. It was hand-printed by the Cranach Presse in 294 copies, of which eight are on parchment and thirty-six on silk paper. Title and initials are by Eric Gill, ornamentation and woodcuts by Aristide Maillol. The printing—in an Antiqua after N. Jenson—was begun in 1914 and finished in 1926. It indicates the scale of this unique print that the paper was hand-made by Caspard Maillol at Monval near Marly in a factory which was specially erected for this purpose. The paper was made according to a specially developed process from the combined experiences of Harry Graf Kessler, Aristide and Caspard Maillol.

We can well understand when we read in an address by Schröder on the occasion of Aristide Maillol's sixtieth birthday that this book stands as "the most beautiful, not only of German but of European printing of modern times—an object of desire for all future book collectors. One must go back to the wonderful examples of old woodcut art to discover something by which one can measure the woodcuts with which Maillol has decorated these Virgil *Eclogues*."

Schröder was also behind the foundation of the Bremen Presse which was raised by Willy Wiegand to a world-known concern during the years of its existence. Wiegand found much appreciation in America. The celebrated society of bibliophiles, the Gro-

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lier Club, arranged an exhibition of German printings in the spring of 1929. The plan to have American publishers publish in the Bremen Presse was unfortunately upset by the American economic depression in the Summer of 1931.

The foregoing information about the bibliophile, Rudolph Alexander Schröder, might well serve as a prelude to our subject under discussion, as it gives a clear indication of those influences to which German bibliophiles—since 1945—have felt themselves under obligation. It shows also which traditions they are following.

In 1948 Schröder began his Lichtenfels Address with these words: "It is a strange feeling for me today to stand again before book enthusiasts and book-collectors after a lapse of years—among people to whom beautiful books are something very specially near the heart. It is almost as if, in a time of emergency buildings and repair work, I should now be talking about problems of modern one-family houses—their aesthetics, hygiene etc.—to a circle of formerly well-situated house- and garden-owners or architects, to whose guild I myself have also belonged. Something ghostly must cling to such a talk, empty resonance disturbing the air and, at the best, conjuring memories back to the mind of things which will not be able to exist again for us Germans for a long time, things which are not allowed to exist anymore."

Schröder's words of recollection show clearly the situation which existed for German bibliophiles. But there is also shown the indomitable power of the love for beautiful things and it is proof of the imperishability of the spirit that our bibliophiles have succeeded in finding their way back again to earlier activities, in realizing many new plans, or at least in bringing the realization of such plans nearer.

We review some of the efforts made in connection with beautiful books which can be credited to the bibliophile societies:

The Gesellschaft der Bibliophilen (Society of Bibliophiles)—known earlier as the Weimarer Bibliophile Gesellschaft, which was founded on Jan. 1, 1899, by the efforts of the *Periodical for Book Lovers*, edited by Fedor von Zobeltitz as we have already mentioned, was re-formed in 1948. One of this society's publications is illustrated by the celebrated Munich woodcut artist, Josef Weisz: Friedrich Hölderlin's poem "An den Aether." The wood-



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cutter and hand-printer, Josef Weisz, is already well known to bibliophiles through his work *Der gestirnte Himmel* (*The Starry Sky*) which appeared in the Insel-Verlag. His new work—the woodcuts for Josef Weinheber's *Von der Kunst und vom Künstler* (*Of Art and the Artist*)—can be spoken of with absolute truth as a modern masterpiece of book art. (Henry Tschudy Verlag St. Gallen, 200 copies signed by the artist).

The Society of Bibliophiles also presented anew Professor Theodor Heuss' study, *Zur Aesthetik der Karikatur* (*On the Aesthetics of Caricature*). Professor Heuss, President of the Federal Republic, is also member of the society which fact may serve to underline the special importance of bibliophilism in Western Germany. The Bibliophile Society's chief task after 1945 was, however, to continue the year book for book lovers, *Imprimatur*. This brilliant year book was started exactly twenty-five years ago by Dr. Ernst L. Hauswedell, Dr. R. Johannes Meyer, and Siegfried Buchenau. They created a survey which extends right over the whole extent of book-collecting, which demands and cultivates a catholic knowledge—for your true bibliophile is to no small degree of an enquiring turn of mind! Particularly from among those book-lovers themselves emerge substantial treatises and lovingly written books on poets, poetry, bookmaking, book-collecting, etc. Siegfried Buchenau, as editor-in-chief of the year book, liked to have the main articles connected by a definite theme. Thus Volume VI was exclusively dedicated to German Romanticism, Volume IX to German Book Art in the first quarter of the Twentieth Century. Volumes VII and VIII are devoted, in the main, to the German Classical period and the German Baroque. The new volume has ten articles on Dutch Culture of the Seventeenth Century. Among these we find published for the first time the results of the investigations of Professor H. van de Waal on Rembrandt's etchings for the *Piedra gloriosa des Menasseh ben Israel*. At the same time, modern book lore is also given a hearing in interesting articles. Berthold Hack writes about the book artist, Imre Reiner; Paul Raabe reports from Alfred Kubin's work room, and Georg Kurt Schauer writes about Josef Weisz. The world-embracing "Miscellen" are places of discovery for every book-lover. These year books are landscapes of the spirit, of beauty, and of love to such a high degree of cultivation as is hardly to be found any more in the German language.

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The Maximilian Society which was founded on December 22, 1911, in Berlin, has taken up its activities again in Hamburg since the Second World War. It has dedicated itself to the production of beautiful books in a very extensive manner. We can only mention a few of the titles here, but the connoisseur will be able to judge the measure of these books from the moment he hears the names of the authors and the book designers.

In a translation by Rudolph Alexander Schröder, William Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* appeared after Alfred Kubin's *Picture ABC*, 1933. The drawings by E.R. Weiss were discovered after the artist's death. As a facsimile-edition of the handwriting of the poet, Hugo von Hoffmannsthal's *Der Thor und der Tod* (*Thor and Death*) appeared. It was followed by *Leben und Wandel Lazaril von Tormes* (*Life and Deeds of Lazaril von Tormes*) in the German translation of 1614 from a lost manuscript. A very special treasure is Oskar Kokoschka's *Ann Eliza Reed* with eleven full-page lithographs. This was printed in 660 copies on the hand-press of the "Landeskunst" school in Hamburg by Richard von Sichowsky and Paul Wunderlich, and the printer's note is signed by the artist. It is among the most beautiful books of the year 1952. In 1954 *Das Buch Tobie* with fifteen woodcuts by Edwin Scharff received the same honor. Gerhard Marcks finished eleven woodcuts for the Low German fairy tale (the version by Phillipp Otto Runge) *Von dem Fischer un syner Fru* (*The Fisherman and his Wife*). Two important items among the publications of the Maximilian Society in Hamburg are *Die venezianische Buchgraphik des 18. Jahrhunderts* (*Venetian Book Graphic Arts of the 18th Century*) by Maria Lanckoronska, and the *Handbuch der Einbandkunde* (*Handbook of Book Binding*) by Hellmuth Helwig.

American booklovers should be interested in the monograph on the master bookbinder, Ignatz Wiemeler (1895-1952), which the library director of the Gutenberg Museum in Mainz, Dr. Helmut Presser, has worked out very sensitively. From October 2-24, 1935, Wiemeler had exhibited in New York. The catalogue appeared under the title *Ignatz Wiemeler: Modern Book Binder* Museum of Modern Art; New York, 1935 with nine illustrations. The exhibition director, Monroe Wheeler, wrote a most learned introduction, and Wiemeler himself contributed the article "Ideals in Bookbinding." A most important essay of Wiemeler's "Book-



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binding, Old and New" appeared in *The Dolphin*, Vol. I, New York, 1933.

Other German bibliophile societies like the Gesellschaft der Bücherfreunde (Society of Book Lovers) in Hamburg, founded in 1908, or the Fränkische Bibliophile Gesellschaft (Frankonian Bibliophile Society) which is presided over by the long-standing friend of Gerhard Hauptmann, C.F.W. Behl, are dedicated mainly to writings about their own regions. Rare or vanished books of importance are rediscovered in beautiful form, but at the same time contemporary authors and artists are sponsored.

A very special position in the circle of German bibliophile societies is taken by the Bibliophile-Gesellschaft in Cologne. The first president was Dr. H. Stinnes whose widely known collecting hobby was "Copy No. I" in numbered luxury and special editions. Today there are still many anecdotes and legends told about him. After his death, Pastor G.M. Rody took over the direction of the Cologne Bibliophile Society. He is known, among other things, for being the author of the German translation of the Weimar edition of the first book to be written about the love of books, Richard de Bury's *Philobiblon*. This book was first printed in Cologne in 1473, later appeared in December 1955 in a brilliant edition with German translation by Dr. Alfred Hartmann for the Swiss Bibliophile Society. Printed on the Berne handpress by Emil Jenzer in Burgdorf, this edition is counted among the most noble of bibliophile printings of recent years.

Among other members of the committee of that period belongs the internationally celebrated author of the book *Das Buch vom Papier* (*The Book about Paper*), Armin Renker. The Bibliophile Society in Cologne is once again sending out charming invitations to its "Tea Hours." These sheets—a co-operative work of members of the society—alone are worth collecting. They present bibliographic dates of lectures, drawings, photos, delightful sketches around the theme of the "Tea Hour," and many a bibliophile discovery.

The Berliner Bibliophilen-Abend (Berlin Bibliophile Evening), founded in 1904 at the instigation of Fedor von Zobeltitz, has also started its activities again.

Next to the bibliophile societies there are also several printing firms who have devoted themselves to valuable and beautiful

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books. Here we can only mention three of them: The Trajanus Presse in Frankfurt/Main, the Eggebrecht-Presse, and the Herbert Post Presse. Concerning the aims of the Trajanus Presse, its director, Gotthard de Beauclair, says:

"The Trajanus Presse took its name from the column of the Emperor Trajan in Rome as a symbol of the art of letter writing. As head of the firm I am particularly concerned with the printing of valuable works of modern authors in a fitting style. On principle, I keep to setting by hand, as no machine setter can afford the care needed for a work of art. It is true, theoretically, such works can be set by machines, but in reality the technical process has its own limits. As far as the actual printing, however, is concerned the highly developed printing machines and well trained craftsmen can obtain the same quality which was formerly achieved by printing by hand. A firm such as ours has, in my opinion, the main task of stimulating contemporary artists to distinguish themselves in the field of book illustration. In connection with the wood block printing I prefer the black or colored woodcut which fits in best with the picture of the cut type. I would like to create works for the booklovers who do not want to hold in their hands favorite books in editions of uniform mass production."

Gotthard de Beauclair was born in Ascona (in Switzerland) in 1907 and grew up there. After apprentice years with the firm of Klingspor Brothers in Offenbach/Main, he worked with the illustrator, Fritz Kredel (now living in New York) in the workshop of Rudolph Koch. De Beauclair came at the invitation of his friend Ernst Kellner, of the Drugulin Presse to Leipzig to the printing house Haag-Drugulin which was directed by him. From there he was taken by Anton Klippenberg in 1928 as typographer to the Insel-Verlag—with which organization he is still connected in the capacity of art director. He is responsible for all questions of typography and book binding for the concern.

In the matter of book covers, de Beauclair was able to call upon old connections and friends of the Insel-Verlag, such as the artists Walter Tiemann, E.R. Weiss, Emil Preetorius, Marcus Behmer, etc. It was possible for him to attract younger artists such as Jan Tschichold, Fritz Kredel, Herbert Post, Rudo Spemann, Wilhelm Neufeld, Erwin Poell, etc.



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De Beauclair used to have close and friendly connections with Carl Ernst Poeschel (who would have liked to see him as his successor), and with the type cutter and printer, Fritz Arnold. Through friendly agreement between the Insel-Verlag Wiesbaden, and the type founders, D. Stempel AG, Frankfurt, de Beauclair, besides being with the former firm as art director, has a new field of activity in the Trajanus Presse, which was specially founded for him.

The publications of the Trajanus Presse are highly prized numbered masterpieces, some of which have been successful in competitions for the *Most Beautiful Books*.

Of great responsibility, and single minded enterprise is the Eggebrecht-Press in Mainz. It was founded in 1936 by the twenty-six-year old Albrecht Eggebrecht. As a pupil of Prof. Ch. H. Kleukens, strengthened by a fiery idealism, he dedicated himself to the "preservation of tradition, and its continuation, in harmony with the possibilities of modern times."

He wanted to attract a wide range of booklovers with beautiful books at reasonable prices. After the work on the *Gutenberg Year Book* in 1941, this press had to discontinue its work. The Second World War destroyed practically the whole equipment of the workshop and spoiled the whole stock of the publishing house. Albrecht Eggebrecht died shortly after the end of the war. In 1947 a new start was made, in spite of many difficulties, and the business was mainly founded on printing for industry. In 1951 the first book of the newly rebuilt press was *ABC der Grossen Drucker* (*The ABC of Great Printers*) by Helmut Presser. In 1952 the appearance of *Sappho* in the translation by Karl-William Eigenbrodt, with illustrations by Hannes Gaab was distinguished in the competition for the most beautiful book of 1952. And so followed book after book until the *Des Melachos Bukolische Episteln* (*Melachos's Bucolic Epistles*) in the German poetic form by Aloysius X. Weintraub, newly edited by Urs Usenbenz, with nineteen colored woodcuts by Hanns Studer. The Eggebrecht Collection brings real little gems in exquisite form for the lovers of true book art and the friends of world literature.

The Herbert Post Presse, whose activities in the workshops of the city of Halle, in Burg Giebichenstein, are well remembered by bibliophiles, was also able to recommence its work after the

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Second World War. Herbert Post was another who got his experience in the workshops of Rudolph Koch in Offenbach/Main. First of all, he was in the Fachschule für Buch- und Kunstgewerbe in Frankfurt/Main. His type, Post-Antiqua belongs, according to Joachim Kirchner's *Dictionary of the Book*, to the "most widely used type face of the century."

After the end of the Second World War, Herbert Post was called by Prof. Wilhelm H. Lange to the Werkkunstschule in Offenbach/Main. In 1955 Post was chosen as principal of the School for German Master Printers in Munich. Herbert Post is mainly interested in the distribution of contemporary literature in good and cheap editions.

It would be too much for the scope of this article if I were to talk about every publishing house in Germany which was interested in beautiful books. Their work is judged each year in the *Most Beautiful Book of the Year* competitions. This institution has become international as can be seen from the Frankfurt Book Fair in 1956 when prize-winning books from Germany, France, Great Britain, Netherlands, Norway, Austria, and Switzerland were exhibited.

A panorama of fine books is to be seen in the Klingspor Museum in Offenbach/Main. At the international Book Art Exhibition in Leipzig in 1927—which took place under the patronage of Max Liebermann, Adolph von Harnak, and Gerhard Hauptmann—parts of the collection of Dr. Karl Klingspor were exhibited in the "Room of a Bibliophile." Dr. Klingspor was the awakener of artistic typescript in Germany. This collection and the effects left behind by the typescript artist, Rudo Spemann—who died in 1947 in Russian captivity—have been donated by the heirs to the city of Offenbach/Main which opened the museum and maintain it. Prof. Georg A. Mathéy was appointed as organizer and director. Among other things, Mathéy was the publisher of the Daedalus prints, and collaborator of the Cranach Presse of Graf Kessler. His *Ten Wood Cuts for the Bible*, with the foreword by Theodor Däubler, and the illustrated edition of Kakuzo Okakura's *The Book of Tea*, with the twenty colored lithographs of Mathéy's, became a very big success of the Insel-Verlag.

In the Klingspor Museum we find books from the Kelmscott Press of William Morris, works of the Bremen Presse, of Count



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Kessler, the assorted works of the bibliographic societies, of the Pan Press, the Doves Press, and the Officina Bodoni. Here we can see once again the work of such important book artists as E.R. Weiss, G.A. Math  y, F.M. Eh  mcke, Emil Preetorius, Gunter B  hmer, Max Slevogt, Melchior Lechter; admire the typescript of Eckmann, Peter Behrens, Tiemann, Rudo Spemann and, above all, get a chance to study the art of Rudolph Koch; and be continually drawn again and again to the heavenly bindings of the unforgettable, great master bookbinder, Ignatz Wiemeler.

The Institute of New Book and Typescript Art—which is a collateral organization of the museum—has the task of pushing forward all efforts for the technical and artistic quality of books. With the museum as a background a Klingspor Society will be founded. This society sets itself the task with the support of all those who are interested in quality—and in artistic and technical form—to cultivate, to advance, and to promote the creative art of bookbinding and typeprinting in our days. This goal will be reached through the publication of its own works, periodicals dealing with book and typescript art of the whole world, together with exhibitions and lectures.

Prof. Georg A. Math  y himself outlines the boundaries of this new show of beautiful books. "It is not the task of the Klingspor Museum to get into competition with the big book collectors of Europe and America. Quite intentionally it limits itself to the special task of serving exclusively the Book and the art of writing of our own times. The museum is the only one in the world operating within these limits, and therein lies its value.

The Gutenberg Museum, also in Mainz, owns a big collection of books. Over 2,000 volumes form a document on the development of the art of modern printing and bookbinding, both at home and abroad. This museum owns among other treasures the biggest collection on the continent of the publications of William Morris, the revivalist of the art of printing books.

The question is always arising—is Bibliophilism in harmony with the spirit of today? The question is unnecessary. The real book collector is filled with the magic of the book. It is a remembrance of the time when the traffic with words was something special to all people, something mystic, magical, healing and holy, a remembrance of the sacramental association with books.

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The "Order of Book Magic" will never be founded, but it exists all the stronger in every collector throughout the world in the consciousness of his duty to preserve it.

### *The Plight of the London Bookshops*

BOOKSELLERS in England are grumbling, but then booksellers the world over, like farmers, are born grumblers. Their complaint now is not a lack of business but a lack of books. Business, for once, is too good and demand far exceeds supply. I must admit that they have something to grumble about, for never in the thirty years that I have been book-hunting in England have I found such a scarcity of good books. Even the bread-and-butter material—the minor first edition, the pretty binding, standard sets—the stock-in-trade of every general dealer—is lacking in any quantity these days. For instance, I was anxious to buy a folio—not a first—edition of *Johnson's Dictionary*. Normally, I could have had my pick of half-a-dozen. This year I didn't see a single copy of this comparatively common book.

This serious situation that faces English book dealers is reflected in the auction sales. Before the war, Sotheby's, Hodgson's and, to a lesser degree, Christie's used to run almost daily sales of books during the Summer months. In June this year, there were only three sales, of which but one had any really fine books to offer. And the prices! A group of early Tudor schoolbooks, written by Robert Whittinton and printed by Wynkyn de Worde, was the star attraction of this one good sale at Sotheby's. There were eight of these rather dull and certainly not beautiful text books—small, thin quartos, all bound together in one volume. Some years ago, I had bought three very similar items by the same author and printer, for an average of around seven to eight pounds apiece, so I was interested to see what this lot would bring. The consensus was that it would fetch £200. One dealer I spoke to thought it might go as high as £300. He was astounded, as was I, to watch it knocked down for £1300!

Why have fine books become so scarce? I put this question to a number of bookmen and got a variety of answers: 1) General prosperity, despite high taxation, has not made it necessary for the few big private libraries left in England to come on the market. 2) The destruction of books during the war is now being seriously felt. 3) The desire of librarians, especially in America, to increase their holdings and expand their fields. 4) An increase in book buyers everywhere, notably in South America, since the war. 5) All the good books have finally gone to the United States and there just aren't any more.

This last reason, though offered in jest, has a real basis of truth. American librarians, in particular, have been draining the London market for many years, and now, with increased budgets and gifts of money, they have stepped up their activities enormously. One institution, for example, has a member of its staff spend five months in England buying constantly in Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century literature.

Where will it end? Several English dealers intimated that London has ceased to be the center of the book trade and that soon they will have to come to the



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United States to buy their stock. Indeed, during the convention of the International Association of Antiquarian Booksellers, held in New York in the Fall of 1955, many delegates from England and the Continent bought books during their stay. Ironically, on my trip to England this year I purchased several of these, much to the amusement of their vendors. But those dealers who hope to replenish their shelves from these shores may find in the not too distant future the same situation as exists now in their own country.

With American collectors allowed to deduct from their tax up to thirty per cent of their annual income in gifts to recognized institutions, many collections are being given away or willed to libraries, thus removing them from the market forever. This is splendid for American culture, but it means that before very long what has been in the past a comparatively generous flow of material through bookshop and auction houses may dry up to a feeble trickle.

DAVID MAGEE

### *Letter from Florence*

ON DR. HANS MARDERSTEIG OF THE OFFICINA BODONI

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jack Werner Stauffacher, of the Greenwood Press in San Francisco, is well known to members as the printer of several of the Club's books and Keepsakes (*Miner's Own Book*, *Catnachery*, etc.). For the past year, on a Fulbright Scholarship, he has been living in Florence with his wife and two children; his major project is research on certain Seventeenth Century Italian type designers. At the moment, under the auspices of the United States Information Service and the American Institute of Graphic Arts, Jack is organizing an Italian book show to be exhibited in this country. We have been fortunate in receiving several letters from him, which reveal certain aspects of fine printing in Italy today. Herewith, we give some excerpts from these letters which we believe will be of special interest:

"Recently I journeyed to Verona to visit Dr. Hans Mardersteig of the Officina Bodoni. He is a most formidable man, rather cold and reserved. I could not really enter into his world; it all takes time. He must have the perfect atmosphere in which to work, and the most beautiful site that you could imagine. Everything is just too perfect, too idyllic, beyond your dreams. Only in Europe could such a man function with such success. A certain classic air is felt as you move around his shop; but it can't help itself as Verona is a city of another age.

"From his shop, from the very gesture of his eyes, you sense a kind of printer which no doubt flourished centuries ago. You sense a profound order to his activities—so much so that you felt that he could not relax for a moment. This troubled me a little. I sensed a conflict between the Man and the Printer.

"Actually, Dr. Mardersteig owns two printing shops, both situated on Via Marsala. His handpress books are produced at his home (Officina Bodoni), and here in three rooms on the ground floor of his villa, he makes these wonderful books. Three men work here: a pressman, another to take the sheets off the press, and the third to set type. The press was made to order after an early German design. I saw all sorts of interesting methods for dampening the paper.

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Of course, the stern master keeps a very close eye on everything, and until a few years ago he did all the presswork himself; he told me that he could work at the press for sixteen hours at a time! A truly dedicated man.

"The view from his shop window is of all Verona: beautiful green rolling hills and a most unique city. His second and larger shop, down the street, is where he does the machine book work—but the same perfectly organized atmosphere. Here he has two Monotype machines and three fine presses. About twenty-five people work here. He has separated the hand from machine operation because you can't do both under the same roof: the machine world demands another tempo; both are totally different in approach. Incidentally, he has designed four typefaces. Thus, Dr. Mardersteig reigns like a king along Via Marsala. I am eager to make a short film on him and his printing offices, and also on some of the Italian handpaper mills."

### *Exhibition of Fine Modern French Bindings*

THE STANFORD UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY will exhibit from Sunday afternoon at four, September 23 through October 20, fine modern French binding from the collections of Mr. Morgan A. Gunst and the Edward H. Hellers, of San Francisco.

This will be the first exhibition in the United States emphasizing the work of the nine leading contemporary binders of Paris. Thirty-three volumes are the work of Rose Adler, Paul Bonet, Henri Creuzevault and Pierre-Lucien Martin, the supreme artists in modern design for book decoration. The distinguished masters, J. Anthoine-Legrain, Robert Bonfils, Georges Cretté, René Kieffer and Jean Lambert have one example each.

These binders have made original contributions to the hand bound book in a style definitely modern and typically French. Also, each one deserves consideration on his individual approach—whether as designer, craftsman, or both. Usually the French designer employs artisans to forward and to finish the patterns.

Pre-eminent of women binders, Rose Adler is one of the first to adopt the new formula for binding design. She has achieved an exceptional charm and beauty in her work. Her particular contribution is using mosaic forms for texture, or to add a play of planes—a transparency.

Paul Bonet, the architect of the book, almost dominates the exhibit with fifteen bindings. He has evolved an entirely fresh style of book decoration—"Irradiante." It is defined—"The entire design is composed of an interplay of fillets of gold which spread from the center. By an intensive study of their curves, they catch the light and give an astonishing impression of high relief." He is without rival today—a versatile and dynamic artist.

Henri Creuzevault has a range of imagination difficult to describe—perhaps, monumental is his style. The youngest and most promising binder-craftsman is Pierre-Lucien Martin whose conception for abstract design is remarkable.

One of the aims of the Stanford show is to call attention to the book as a work of art. The great French painters and sculptors have taken a keen interest in



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the book as an art form; in many instances designing the format, title page and chapter heads.

A carefully prepared catalogue, containing a foreword by M. Jacques Guignard of the Bibliothèque Nationale and a preface by Mr. J. Terry Bender of the Stanford University Libraries, will be invaluable to the enthusiastic bibliophile.

Here will be a rare opportunity to enjoy and to study the exquisite expressions of the vibrant art of France.

HERBERT and PETER FAHEY

### *Percy Muir's Autobiography*

MEMBERS who recall with pleasure the Club's publication, *Catnachery*—and that must include everyone who bought it—will be interested to hear that its author, Percy Muir, has just published his autobiography (*Minding My Own Business*, Chatto and Windus, London). The book, however, is more than the personal reminiscences of a prominent London bookseller; it is as much, if not more, the life story of a famous bookshop.

From the earliest times, bookselling and publishing went hand-in-hand, and it was not until the Nineteenth Century, when the age of specialization set in, that the two professions drifted apart. Elkin Mathews was probably the last well-known example of the combination. It is the history of this firm that Mr. Muir traces (his own connection with it most modestly interwoven) in this delightful book.

Beginning as a country bookseller, with only an occasional and rather timid fling at publishing, Elkin Mathews came to London in the early Nineties, where he was joined later by the more flamboyant John Lane. Together they made publishing history. Their flair for unknown authors with real promise was extraordinary, equalled in modern times perhaps only by Grant Richards, Martin Secker, and in America, Mitchell Kennerley. Among the authors whose names appear over their imprint may be mentioned Max Beerbohm, Kenneth Grahame, Masfield, Wilde, Francis Thompson, and that strange and rather dreadful character, Baron Corvo. Of these, only Oscar Wilde had any kind of literary reputation by the time they came to Elkin Mathews and Lane. The firm's most famous illustrator was, of course, Beardsley, and its best known publication the *Yellow Book*, considered by the blue-nosed of the period to be the height of *fin-de-siècle* depravity.

Unfortunately, Mr. Muir devotes far too few pages to these early days of the business, but, in fairness, the book is primarily an autobiography and we cannot carp because its author was born too late. We can only hope that some day he will give us the full story of the gentle Elkin Mathews and his early partner, that buccaneer of the publishing world, John Lane.

*Minding My Own Business* is, as we have said, the story of a bookshop, and it begins really with the acquisition of the business by A. W. Evans in 1922. With the aid of H. V. Marrot, publishing was continued along with the selling of books, but only in a desultory sort of way; the main line of endeavor soon be-

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came the purveying of rare books. It was as a specialist in this field that Mr. Muir was invited to join the firm as a partner.

The fortunes of Elkin Mathews, Ltd., its phenomenal rise in a very short time to rank with the titans, its rapid decline during the depression, the tales of its partners—eccentrics to a man—Mr. Muir's own participation in the heroic and finally successful effort to rescue the business from oblivion—these make up the main burden of Percy Muir's story, a story always interesting and often astonishing.

D. M.

### *Exhibition Notes*

THE PRESENT EXHIBIT in the clubrooms is devoted to *Contemporary German Book Design*, an exhibit being circulated in the United States under the auspices of The University of Kentucky Libraries. Although Mr. Adolph's article in the current *News-Letter*, "Bibliophilism in Western Germany Since 1945," refers to printing of the last decade, the books in the show are limited to the three years 1952-54. However, a number of the outstanding books mentioned in the article were printed during those three years and are included in the exhibit: *Sappho* of the Eggebrecht-Press; *Imprimatur*, the year book of the Gesellschaft der Bibliophilen; three books of the Maximilian-Gesellschaft—*Das Buch Tobie* with 15 woodcuts by Edwin Scharff, *Ann Eliza Reed* with 11 full-page lithographs by Oskar Kokoschka, and Helmut Presser's monograph on the famous German bookbinder, Ignatz Wiemeler; and several examples from the Trajanus Presse. Unfortunately, the exhibit is a traveling exhibit and the books can stay in the clubrooms only a few weeks. They will be shown through September 21.

Following the German book show, the Exhibit Committee plans a display of Books in Production. Included in this exhibit, which will open about September 24 and continue through November, will be the next two Club publications, being printed by Mallette Dean and the Grabhorns respectively, and work either in progress or just completed by Lewis Allen, Lawton Kennedy, Adrian Wilson, and others.

### *Notes on Publications*

IN THE LAST issue of the *Quarterly*, we announced for Fall publication a book by Robinson Jeffers—a lecture given by him in 1941 at Harvard College. The title has now been chosen by Mr. Jeffers: *Themes in My Poems*. The book is being designed, illustrated, printed, and bound by Mallette Dean (pity he doesn't make his own paper and ink) and we can assure you that the man who gave us the beautiful *Physiologist* two years ago has produced in this new venture a very different, but equally handsome, volume. The five woodcuts to illustrate the five themes of Mr. Jeffers' poetry are truly striking—abstractions printed in two, and sometimes three, colors. The edition is limited to only 350 copies; the price is \$8.50, plus sales tax where applicable.



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Also in the last issue of the *Quarterly* we hinted something about the Christmas book and its importance. Herbert Fahey, noted San Franciscan printer and binder, has been working for many years on a history of early printing in California. Now at last the history is finished and the Club has been granted the privilege of publishing this interesting and instructive book for its members.

*Early Printing in California* is a book of great significance to all collectors and readers of Western Americana, especially to those interested in typography. Mr. Fahey has confined his work to the Mexican period, ending his story with statehood. His research has been prodigious and the results have fully justified the years of loving labor he has expended on this book.

Physically, the volume will be a handsome quarto of some 250 pages, designed and printed by the Grabhorn Press, with numerous illustrations, facsimiles, etc. The book is being handset in Oxford type, appropriately bound, in an edition of 400 copies. The price will be \$23.50 before publication (25.00 after that date) plus the usual sales tax in California.

### *Elected to Membership*

*The following have been elected to membership since the Summer issue of the News-Letter:*

<i>Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
J. H. Allen	Darien, Connecticut	R. G. Burmister
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John H. Urabec	Los Angeles	Robert Haines
Duke University	Durham, N. C.	James D. Hart
University of Denver	Denver, Colorado	James D. Hart
University of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, Penn.	James D. Hart

### *Serendipity*

THE WARD RITCHIE PRESS has one book in progress for The Limited Editions Club: an edition of *Lucretius*, the Leonard translation, with woodcuts by Paul Landacre. It will be issued in an edition of 1500 copies and should be out later this year.

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THE PLANTIN PRESS of Saul and Lillian Marks is also doing two books for The Limited Editions Club: the first is a limited edition of Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*; and the second is a new edition of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey*. Exact publication date of these two volumes will be determined later.

THE LION AND UNICORN PRESS of the Royal College of Art, Exhibition Road, London, S.W.7, is an unusual publishing venture founded in 1953. Its primary aim is to publish each year a few titles in limited editions which, it is hoped, will reach the highest standards of typographic design, illustration, and binding, and, in so doing, to carry on the traditions of the many private presses which once flourished in England. At the moment, this press intends to publish three books annually in editions limited to 200 copies and invites annual subscriptions of approximately \$15.00 for these volumes. For the 1956-1957 period, they will issue: *Sir Jacob Epstein*, a book of photographs of this famous sculptor, specially taken for this publication; *Red Lacquer Days*, a brilliant series of articles by Sir Hugh Casson on the new Chinese People's Republic, illustrated by numerous drawings by the author; and *De Justicia Pingenda*, a hitherto unknown work by the Mantuan doctor of medicine and humanist, Battista Fiera (1469-1538).

ADRIAN WILSON of San Francisco, one of the country's fine printers who has produced books and keepsakes for the Club, has announced a new book, *Printing for Theater*. Although this handsome folio concerns the programs and announcements which he has done for the Interplayers, San Francisco's distinguished drama group, the book should have an appeal for all those interested in fine printing. The edition, set in linotype Caslon and printed on handmade paper, is limited to 250 copies. The price is \$25 per copy. Recently, Adrian Wilson accepted a position with the University of California Press as a designer of books; however, he plans to continue his private press operations "after hours."

BRUCE ROGERS, the dean of typographers, has designed and hopes to issue, a number of early English texts. The series will be known as "October House Classics," and will include *Beowulf*, *The Robin Hood Ballads*, *The Life of Saint George*, Juliana Berner's *Treatise on the Blazing of Arms*, Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *Early English Lyrics*, and others. Most of these titles will be printed in the original antique English spelling, and all will be printed in Goudy's posthumous type, Goudy Thirty, a black letter face that suggests the manuscript. The editions, limited to about 300 copies, will be issued professedly as objects of beauty, and will be illustrated or decorated by well-known artists, and produced by various fine printers. The first of the series, to be completed in September, is *The Lyf of Saint George*, illustrated with a large rondel of Saint George by Valenti Angelo; the paper is English handmade printed damp by The Thistle Press in an edition of 300 copies. The binding, also designed by BR, is black buckram stamped in blind and colors and gold. The price has been set tentatively at \$15.00.



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